

**Meeting Notes
North Delta Agency Team
November 6, 2003**

The following provides a summary of the North Delta Agency Team Meeting held on November 6, 2003. The next NDAT meeting will be scheduled at a future date to coincide with the further refinement of the project alternatives.

Attendees:

Gwen Knittweis – DWR	Collette Zemitis – DWR
Bill Dutton – USBR	Patricia Fernandez – CBDA
Ken Trott – USDA	Jeff Stuart – NOAA Fisheries
Suzanne DeLeon – DFG	Mike Finan – USACE
Chris Elliott – J&S	April Zohn – J&S

Members Invited but not Present:

Brad Burkholder – DFG	Paul Bowers – USACE
Margit Aramburu – DPC	Shanna Draheim – EPA
Ryan Olah – USFWS	Rosalie Del Rosario – NOAA Fisheries
Evelyne Gulli – SLC	Frank Wernette – DFG
Dennis O'Bryant - DOC	Shelby McCoy - RWQCB
John Thomson – USFWS	Doug Morrison – USFWS
Diane Windham – NMFS	Terry Mills – CBDA
Steve Shaffer – CDFA	Pete Rabbon – DWR/Rec Board
Rod Johnson – CBDA	Rebecca Wren – USACE
Craig Stevens – J&S	Jim Starr – DFG
Kathy Dadey – EPA	Matthew Reischman - CVRWQCB
Marina Brand – DFG	Mike Jewel – USACE
Ron Ott – CBDA	Scott Cantrell – DFG
Bellory Fong – CBDA	Jeannie Blakeslee – DOC/DCRP
Curt Schmutte – DWR	Mike Aceituno – NOAA Fisheries

Handouts: Figures of Flood Control (4) and Ecosystem Restoration (2) Project Alternatives
 Questions for North Delta Science Advisory Panel and List of Participants

Notes:

I. Project Update. Gwen Knittweis provided the following updated North Delta Information:

- a. **Federal Lead Agency.** Due to significant budget and schedule implications, it is unlikely that USACE Planning will act as the federal lead agency under NEPA for the North Delta project. DWR estimates that if USACE Planning were to act as federal lead for the project, the state would have to provide an additional \$800,000 dollars in matching funds, and extend the project schedule by as much as 2 years, to complete the environmental document and feasibility study, which is required by USACE Planning. Additional efforts to bring USACE Regulatory and/or USBR onboard as the federal lead agency have also been unsuccessful. DWR is planning to ask either the CALFED Management Team or the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to facilitate selection of a federal lead agency for the project, but, in the interim, is proceeding with a "NEPA friendly" EIR. DWR will also be seeking funding through the CALFED PSP process next year to implement the ecosystem restoration (ER) portions of the proposed project.

During the discussion of the status of the federal lead agency, Mike Finan stated that USACE Regulatory feels that USBR should be considered for selection as the federal lead agency given the funding they have provided for the project to date. USACE Regulatory could act as a cooperating agency under NEPA, but the federal action (e.g., permitting) that would actually trigger their involvement in process would not occur until after a preferred alternative had been selected. He also stated that the project appeared to be a conveyance project and that, if it was in fact a flood control and ecosystem restoration project, that the purpose and need statement would need to be crafted to reflect that (e.g., to support the 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis).

Bill Dutton asked Gwen to provide him with a breakdown of costs for the additional \$800,000 dollars that would be necessary to complete a joint environmental document and feasibility study with USACE Planning.

- b. **EIR/EIS Schedule.** Gwen Knittweis presented the following updated project schedule. The date associated with “construction complete” is reflective of the goals in the CALFED Programmatic EIR/EIS ROD.

Public Draft EIR	Spring 2004
Final Draft EIR	December 2004
Design Complete	Spring 2005
Construction Complete	Spring 2008

- c. **Alternatives Development.** DWR has been working with agency staff and non-profit scientists to develop ER alternatives for the North Delta project, which will be presented to a North Delta Science Advisory Panel on November 13, 2003. This meeting will represent the first of three meetings that DWR will host between now and the spring of 2004 to receive input on the ER alternatives that will be evaluated in the EIR. Collette Zemitis reviewed two figures illustrating conceptual ER alternatives on McCormack-Williamson Tract and asked for input from NDAT members. Ken Trott suggested that an agroeconomist be added to the Science Panel to provide input on the agricultural component of ER (e.g., wildlife friendly agriculture).

Gwen Knittweis distributed figures describing four different potential flood control alternatives. The alternatives were refined from comments received during the public scoping meeting, as well as the results obtained from the hydraulic model. She reviewed objectives of the flood control component of the North Delta project and emphasized that use of McCormack-Williamson Tract as a flood bypass area was critical to meeting these stated objectives. Three of the 4 alternatives presented also utilize Staten Island, or a portion of Staten Island, as a detention basin for retaining peak flows during a flood event. Although controversial, dredging could be included as an optional component for flood control in the EIR.

Action Items:

1. Gwen Knittweis will provide Bill Dutton with a breakdown of costs for the additional \$800,000 dollars that would be necessary to complete a joint environmental document and feasibility study with USACE Planning.
2. Ken Trott will provide Collette Zemitis with the name of one or more agroeconomists who could participate in the North Delta Science Panel.
3. Gwen will look into making a presentation to the *Working Landscapes* group on the status of the North Delta project.

Next Meeting:

The next NDAT meeting will be scheduled at a later date to coincide with further refinement project alternatives. To facilitate review of these alternatives, at the next NDAT meeting, the group will also review a map of the project area, the purpose and need statement, and the permit integration table illustrating the timelines and deliverables required by each of the different regulatory agencies.